

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 276 700

SP 028 288

AUTHOR Corkle, Margaret
TITLE Improving Leadership Skills.
PUB DATE Nov 86
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Council of States on Inservice Education (11th, Nashville, TN, November 21-25, 1986).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Leadership Styles; *Leadership Training; Management Development; *Supervisory Methods; *Teacher Administrator Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Situational Leadership Approach

ABSTRACT

In today's society, educators must have leadership skills to accomplish the tasks required at the university or school district level. The education profession must provide leadership training for present and future administrators. In Situational Leadership, four styles are identified and based on three dimensions: the amount of direction a leader provides; amount of support and encouragement the leader provides; and amount of follower involvement in decision making. The directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating leadership styles are all useful in various situations, but the style with the highest probability of success is the one that matches the development level of the follower (enthusiastic beginner, disillusioned learner, reluctant contributor, or peak performer). The five steps which supervisors and leaders can follow when trying to help followers increase their competence and commitment are: (1) tell the person what you want done; (2) show the person how it is to be done; (3) let the person try; observe performance; and (5) manage the consequences. (CB)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED276700

IMPROVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Margaret Corkle

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Corkle

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

IMPROVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

In today's society an educator must have leadership skills to accomplish the tasks required. It makes little difference if you are at the university level, at the state level, or work for a local school district. All levels are facing financial problems and negative comments about the present educational systems.

I am sure very few of us received leadership training in our degree programs. Leadership skills can be developed in an individual. Business and industry have been developing these skills in their managers, and we in education need to provide leadership training for our present administrators and our future administrators.

Leaders are like experienced physicians. They have a repertoire of behaviors on which they can call to meet the contingencies of a given task or situation. They are flexible rather than rigid.

Do you know what the difference is between a successful leader and an effective leader? Successful leadership is the ability to get others to behave as the leader intended. The job gets done and the leader's needs are satisfied, but the needs of others are ignored. In effective leadership, people perform in accordance with the leader's intention and find this a path to the satisfaction of their own needs. Clearly, one can be successful through coercion, dominance, threats, and fear. It is equally clear that successful leadership yields only short-term results and requires "snoopervision" rather than supervision.

I have talked about leadership. But what is leadership? We each probably have our own ideas what we mean by the term. Most would agree that it is an influence process, working with and through others to accomplish specific goals. It is a process to move an individual or group of people in a specific direction.

Attitudes and feelings are important because they drive people to do what you want when you are not there. When someone has a high degree of commitment to a task or objective and some skill to do the task, you do not have to supervise closely. In Situational Leadership "What is important as a leader is not what happens when you're there, it is what happens when you are not there."

Remember, I said leadership is an influence process. Leadership style is the pattern of behavior you use when you are trying to influence the behavior of others as perceived by them. While your perception of your behavior is important, it tells you only how you "intended" to act. Unless it matches the perception of those you are trying to influence, it is not helpful. For example, if you think you are an empathetic, people-oriented manager, but your people think you are hardnosed, task oriented, whose perception will they act on? Yours or their own?

For years when people talked about leadership style, they identified two styles--Autocratic (directive) leadership style and Democratic (supportive) style. Autocratic leaders used position power and their authority to get results while Democratic leaders used personal power and involved others in participative problem-solving and decision-making processes. Position power was felt to be more important than personal power, but it was found both are needed. You need to focus on positive use of position power.

In Situational Leadership four leadership styles have been identified. Remember, leadership style is the behavior pattern a leader uses when trying to influence others, as perceived by them. Each of the four styles represents different combinations of directive and supportive leadership behavior. These combinations differ in three dimensions: (1) the amount of direction the leader provides; (2) the amount of support and encouragement the leader provides; and (3) the amount of follower involvement in decision-making.

Directive behavior is the extent to which a leader engages in one-way communication--spells out the follower's role, and tells the follower what to do, where to do it, and how to do it.

Supportive behavior is defined as the extent to which a leader engages in two-way communication--listens, provides support and encouragement, and involves the follower in decision-making.

There are four basic leadership styles as types of problem-solving and decision-making processes:

S1 is called Directing--High directive/low supportive behavior.

S1 is characterized by one-way communication. The leader defines roles and goals that tell the subordinate what, how, when, where, and with whom to accomplish the task. Problem-solving and decision-making are initiated by the leader. Solutions and decisions are announced. Work is closely supervised.

S2 is called Coaching--High directive/high supportive behavior. In style 2, two-way communication is increased. The leader continues to direct task accomplishment, but listens to the follower's feelings and ideas about how the task is to be approached or the problem is to be solved. In other words, the leader consults with the subordinate, but control over decision-making or problem-solving remains with the manager.

S3 is called Supporting--High supportive/low directive. In style 3, responsibility for day-to-day problem-solving and decision-making shifts from the leader to the follower. Together the leader and follower identify problems and set goals. The subordinate takes the lead in defining how the task is to be done or the problem is to be solved. The manager's role is to listen and provide assurance, support, resources, and ideas, if requested.

S4 is called Delegating--Low supportive/low directive. In style 4, the manager and the subordinate jointly define the problem. The subordinate then develops an action plan and controls decision-making about how, when, and with whom the problem is to be solved or the task is to be done. The follower runs his/her own show. The manager accepts the subordinate's decisions and only periodically monitors the subordinate's performance.

Situational variables that would affect a choice of leadership style could be: newness of the task, complexity of the task, the time line of the task completion, the amount of change going on in the organization, and primary style of the leader. Situational Leadership focuses on one Situational Variable more than others: the developmental level of the follower.

There is no one best leadership style--successful leaders are able to adapt their style to fit the requirements of the situation.

It was found the amount of direction or support that a leader should provide depends on the development level that the follower exhibits on a specific task, function, or objective.

The Development Level is defined as the competence and commitment of your follower or followers to perform a particular task without supervision. Competence is used rather than ability because people often use ability to mean potential. They talk about natural ability to describe skills a person is born with.

Competence can be developed. It is a function of knowledge or skills that can be gained with training and experience.

Competence is a measure of the subordinate's task, knowledge and skills gained through formal education, on-the-job training, and experience. In determining a subordinate's competence you would also want to look at his/her knowledge of the organization, as well as transferable skills. Planning, time management, interpersonal communication that are important for the accomplishment of the specific task under consideration need also be examined.

Commitment is a function of motivation and confidence. Motivation is the subordinate's interest in the task, his or her commitment to the task, his or her enthusiasm and desire to succeed. Confidence is the person's sense of security, self-assuredness, the extent to which the subordinate trusts that she/he has the ability to work independently.

The leadership style with the highest probability of success is the one that matches the development level of the follower.

The diagram shows the four levels:

- D1 Could be called the enthusiastic beginner
- D2 The disillusioned learner
- D3 The reluctant contributor
- D4 The peak performer

As the developmental level of the individual increases, their competencies and commitment fluctuate. When beginning a task they are enthusiastic and ready to learn. When they get into the task, the individual often finds it more difficult than they thought or less interesting. This disillusionment decreases their commitment. If they overcome this state of development and

learn to perform the task with help from their boss, most individuals then go through a self-doubt stage. They're not sure they are competent. These alternating feelings of competence and self-doubt cause the variable commitment associated with D3. With proper support, individuals can eventually become peak performers. "Enthusiastic beginners, to disillusioned learner, to a reluctant contributor, to a peak performer."

Development level is not a global concept; it is a task specific concept.
People tend to be at different levels depending on the specific task.

Situational Leadership focuses on the appropriateness or effectiveness of leadership styles according to the task relevant development of the follower. Situational Leadership means different strokes for different folks, and Situational Leadership means different strokes for the same folks.

The key is to match Leadership Style to Development Level.

(Overlay)

To determine the appropriate leadership style to use with each of the four development levels, draw a vertical line up from a diagnosed developed level to the leadership curve running through the model. Remember that leaders need to provide their people with what they can't do for themselves at the present time.

Directing is for low development level. - D1's are enthusiastic beginners. The leader tells the individual what, how, when, and where to do various tasks.

Coaching is for low to moderate development level. - D2's to take responsibility need both direction and support. This style that encourages two-way communication helps build confidence and motivation on the part of the follower, while keeping responsibility for an control over decision-making with the leader.

Supporting is for moderate to high development level people who are competent but have variable commitment toward the task. Their variable motivation is a function of lack of confidence. The leader needs to open up two-way communication to support follower's effort to use the skills. The leader and follower share in decision-making, with key roles of the leader being listening and facilitating.

Delegating is for persons at high development level. People at this level are both competent and motivated. A D4 follower is permitted to run the show--decide how, when, and where task is to be accomplished.

Increasing Performance

Your goal should be to help followers increase their competence and commitment to independently accomplish the tasks assigned to them so that you can begin to use less time-consuming styles (such as S3-S4).

Unless people in leadership positions realize and accept the training function in their jobs, they will be continually frustrated and confused about why their subordinates are not performing well. This frustration often forces managers into the most widely used leadership style which is referred to as "leave alone-zap." They hire someone to assume certain responsibilities, tell that person what to do (S1), and then leave them alone (an effective S4). When unacceptable performance occurs, or the person does something wrong, the frustrated manager or leader moves quickly to a punitive S1 and demands to know why things are not getting done, the "zap."

There are five steps to training. These are five steps for developing competence and commitment.

1. Tell the person what you want them to do.

2. Show the person what you want them to do--they need to know what good performance looks like. What are the performance standards? Show and Tell are both directive behaviors--decision-making and problem-solving are controlled by the leader.

3. Let them try - let them try on their own. You should cut back on directive behavior--you are turning over responsibility for the task to the follower--don't turn over too much responsibility too soon--make the risk reasonable.

4. Observe performance - do not go to S4 and leave the person alone--that's the "zap" leadership style--observe, monitor performance.

5. Manage the consequences - There are three basic consequences:

- a. Positive consequences or reinforcer (praising or promotion);
- b. Negative consequences or response (demotion or correction) -
unless a person is doing something that is intrinsically valuable
(they would do it regardless of the feedback);
- c. No response to good performance will gradually decrease the
frequency of the behavior occurring again.

Key to developing people is to catch them doing something right. More than praising and other supportive behaviors, involvement in problem-solving and decision-making communicates to these people that you see them as confident, capable, responsible, and reliable individuals. These messages provide positive feedback and build confidence.

On the other hand, if you continue to direct and closely supervise people for long periods of time, you are sending subordinates a different message--probably you don't see them as confident, capable, and reliable. These underlying messages in turn affect performance.

High level of performance can be obtained when any of the four leadership styles are used appropriately. An inexperienced person can perform at as high a level as an experienced person if directed and closely supervised by a manager. The question is at what cost--time and energy of the manager.

A decrease in performance requires a shift backwards in leadership style--example could be personal problems or change in position or task.

Effective managers know their staff well enough to flexibly manage ever-changing demands upon their organization.

Dr. Margaret Corkle

Dr. Margaret A. Corkle
Director of Staff Development
and Administrative Services
Millard Public Schools
1010 South 144th Street
Omaha, NE 68154

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP II

Situational Leadership is a concept co-developed by Ken Blanchard, author of *The One Minute Manager*, *Putting the One Minute Manager to Work*, and *Leadership and the One Minute Manager*. It is based on a relationship between (1) the amount of direction and control (Directive Behavior) a leader gives; (2) the amount of support and encouragement (Supportive Behavior) a leader provides; and (3) the ability and willingness (Development Level) that a follower exhibits in performing a specific task.

(1) Directive Behavior is:

The extent to which the leader engages in one-way communication; spells out the follower's role and clearly tells the follower(s) what to do, where to do it, how to do it, when to do it, and closely supervises performance.

(2) Supportive Behavior is:

The extent to which a leader engages in two-way communication, listens, provides support and encouragement, facilitates interaction, and involves the follower(s) in decision making.

THE FOUR LEADERSHIP STYLES

- Telling (S1):** High directive/low supportive behavior: Leader provides specific instructions (roles and goals) for follower(s) and closely supervises task accomplishment.
- Coaching (S2):** High directive/high supportive behavior: Leader explains decisions and solicits suggestions from follower(s) but continues to direct task accomplishment.
- Supporting (S3):** High supportive/low directive behavior: Leader makes decisions together with the follower(s) and supports efforts toward task accomplishment.
- Delegating (S4):** Low supportive/low directive behavior: Leader turns over decisions and responsibility for implementation to follower(s).

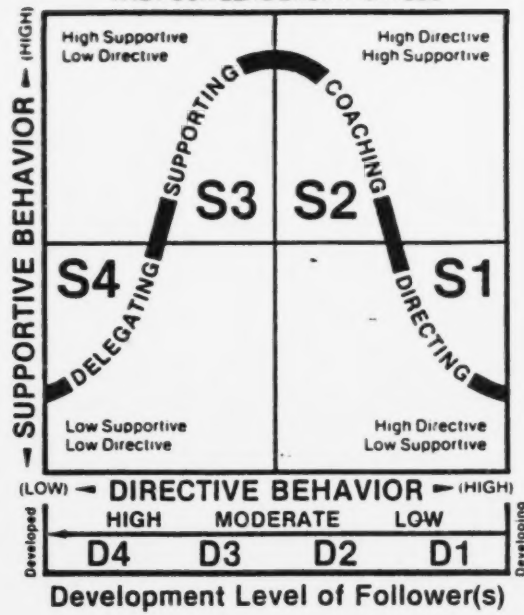
DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

Development level is defined as (1) the follower's job knowledge and skills (ability) and (2) the follower's motivation and/or confidence (willingness). The more able and willing, the more responsibility the subordinate can take for directing his or her own behavior. However, it's important to remember that development level is task specific; an individual or a group is not developing or developed in any total sense.

Developed	Able and Willing	Able But Unwilling or Lacks Confidence	Unable But Willing	Unable and Unwilling or Insecure	Developing
	D4	D3	D2	D1	

(over)

THE FOUR LEADERSHIP STYLES



Dr. Margaret A. Corkle
 Director of Staff Development and Administrative Services
 Millard Public Schools
 1010 South 144th Street
 Omaha, NE 68154